

said base including a clamping assembly adapted for securing the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail of said window covering in a side-by-side arrangement atop said cutting surface so that the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail are in contact with the substantially flat cutting surface;

a cutting assembly including a cutting blade having a cutting edge mounted to said frame for sliding along a movement axis toward and away from said receiving area, said movement axis having a first component of movement extending in a direction substantially parallel to said cutting surface and a second component of movement extending in a direction substantially perpendicular to said cutting surface; and

a driver connected with said cutting assembly for imparting sliding motion to said cutting assembly for moving said cutting blade along the movement axis toward said receiving area, wherein the cutting edge of said cutting blade simultaneously engages and cuts through the bottom rail, the slats and the head rail of said window covering.

241. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 40, wherein the cutting edge of said cutting blade remains substantially parallel to said substantially flat cutting surface when engaging and cutting through the bottom rail, the slats and the head rail of said window covering.

342. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 40, wherein said cutting edge of said cutting blade remains substantially parallel to said substantially flat cutting surface during movement along the movement axis.

43. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 40, wherein each said slat has a major axis and a width defined by an axis extending substantially perpendicular to said major axis, and wherein when said window covering is secured atop said substantially flat cutting surface, the widths of said slats extend in planes that are substantially parallel to one

another and substantially perpendicular to said substantially flat cutting surface.

4 ~~44~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~40~~, wherein said substantially flat cutting surface includes a first end and a second end opposite the first end, the second end of said cutting surface including a backup opposing the cutting edge of said cutting blade, and wherein said backup is adapted to engage the cutting edge after the cutting edge passes through the bottom rail, the slats and the head rail of said window covering for minimizing dulling of the cutting edge.

5 ~~45~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~44~~, wherein said backup is made of nylon.

6 ~~46~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~44~~, said base further comprising a guide mandrel extending between the first and second ends of said cutting surface, wherein said guide mandrel is adapted to slide within an opening of said top rail for guiding movement of said window covering across said cutting surface.

7 ~~47~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~46~~, wherein said clamping assembly is movable across said substantially flat cutting surface toward said guide mandrel for compressing the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail between said clamping assembly and said guide mandrel.

8 ~~48~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~47~~, wherein said clamping assembly includes a clamping block engagable with the bottom rail of said window covering for urging the bottom rail toward the top rail so as to compress the slats between the bottom rail and the top rail.

9 ~~49~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~48~~, wherein said cutting blade includes a pocketed portion that is thinner than a massive portion of said cutting blade that surrounds the pocketed portion, and wherein the cutting edge of said cutting blade is confined entirely with the pocketed portion of said cutting blade.

**Sub 50** (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 49, wherein the massive portion of said cutting blade does not engage the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail of said window covering during a cutting operation.

**51** (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 40, further comprising a measuring assembly adjacent the second end of said cutting surface for measuring an end portion of said window covering to be cut during a cutting operation, wherein said measuring assembly includes a stop block abutable against the end of said window covering being cut and linked with said driver for moving away from said window covering during a cutting operation.

**52** (New) An apparatus for cutting a window covering including a head rail, a bottom rail and slats extending between the head rail and the bottom rail, said apparatus comprising:

- a base having a substantially flat cutting surface;
- a frame overlying said cutting surface and mounted to said base;

- said base including a clamping assembly adapted for securing the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail of said window covering in a side-by-side arrangement atop said cutting surface so that the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail are in contact with the substantially flat cutting surface;

- a cutting assembly including a cutting blade having a cutting edge mounted to said frame for sliding along a movement axis toward and away from said cutting surface, said movement axis having a first component of movement extending in a direction substantially parallel to said cutting surface and a second component of movement extending in a direction substantially perpendicular to said cutting surface; and

- a driver connected with said cutting assembly for moving said cutting blade along the movement axis toward said cutting

surface, wherein the cutting edge of said cutting blade simultaneously engages and cuts through the bottom rail, the slats and the head rail of said window covering, and wherein the cutting edge of said cutting blade remains substantially parallel to said substantially flat cutting surface when engaging and cutting through the bottom rail, the slats and the head rail of said window covering.

53. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein each said slat has a major axis and a width defined by an axis extending substantially perpendicular to said major axis, and wherein when said window covering is secured atop said substantially flat cutting surface, the widths of said slats extend in planes that are substantially parallel to one another and substantially perpendicular to said substantially flat cutting surface.

54. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein when said window covering is secured atop said cutting surface each said slat has a width extending in a plane that is substantially perpendicular to said substantially flat cutting surface.

13 55. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein said substantially flat cutting surface includes a first end and a second end opposite the first end, the second end of said cutting surface including a backup opposing the cutting edge of said cutting blade, and wherein said backup is adapted to engage the cutting edge after the cutting edge passes through the bottom rail, the slats and the head rail of said window covering for minimizing dulling of the cutting edge.

14 56. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 52, said base further comprising a guide mandrel extending between first and second ends of said cutting surface, wherein said guide mandrel is adapted to engage said top rail for guiding movement of said window covering across said cutting surface.

19 ~~57~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~56~~<sup>14</sup>, wherein said clamping assembly is movable across said substantially flat cutting surface and toward said guide mandrel for compressing the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail between said clamping assembly and said guide mandrel.

16 ~~58~~. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~52~~<sup>12</sup>, wherein said cutting blade includes a pocketed portion that is thinner than a massive portion of said cutting blade, the massive portion of said cutting blade surrounding the pocketed portion, and wherein the cutting edge of said cutting blade is confined entirely with the pocketed portion of said cutting blade.

Sub 64 59. (New) The apparatus as claimed in claim 58, wherein the massive portion of said cutting blade does not engage the bottom rail, the slats and the top rail of said window covering during a cutting operation.

IN THE ABSTRACT

Delete the Abstract of the Disclosure presently on file and substitute the attached Abstract therefore.